DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 419 590 PS 026 466

AUTHOR Anderson, Sarah L.; Gramann, Jacqueline A.
TITLE Evaluation Results & Final Report for the Preservice Training for Child Care Workers Project.
INSTITUTION Texas A and M Univ., College Station. Texas Agricultural Extension Service.; Texas State Dept. of Protective and Regulatory Services, Austin.
PUB DATE 1997-08-00
NOTE 33p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Caregivers; Day Care; Early Childhood Education; *Independent Study; *Job Training; Program Evaluation; Training Methods
IDENTIFIERS Caregiver Attitudes; *Caregiver Training; Texas

ABSTRACT

Recent changes such as declining economic status of families and large-scale employment of women have resulted in increased utilization of child care services and the need for qualified child care providers. This study evaluated the Preservice Training for Child Care Workers programs' ability to meet the training needs of rural Texas child care providers. The 8-hour training program combined 21 resources consisting of videotapes and readings, to create an interactive self-study kit with a program manual. Areas covered were developmental stages, age-appropriate activities, positive guidance, fostering self-esteem, health and safety, positive interactions, supervision, and abuse/neglect. The self-study kit was implemented in a pilot study with 70 learners in 27 Texas counties from January to June 1997. Learners checked out the self-study kits for use from county Cooperative Extension agencies. In addition to pre- and posttest evaluations completed by learners, a telephone survey was conducted with 24 county Extension agents, 6 licensing representatives, and 18 child care directors who provided the kit to learners. Findings indicated that all involved with the project rated the training useful and understandable. Survey participants rated the self-study kit 97 percent understandable and 100 percent useful, while learner participants rated the kit 100 percent understandable and useful. Seventy-five percent of survey participants found that the interactive aspects made the kit more usable. The program manual was rated as excellent or good by all survey participants who were familiar with it. All the learners agreed that the training helped them understand their role as a child care worker. (Contains eight figures, six tables, four references, and two appendices that list open-ended responses from participant learners and survey respondents.) (KB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE
The ERIC Facility has assigned this document for processing to: PS
In our judgment, this document is also of interest to the Clearinghouses noted to the right. Indexing should reflect their special points of view. CE

ED 419 590

Texas Agricultural Extension Service
The Texas A&M University System

Evaluation Results & Final Report for the Preservice Training for Child Care Workers Project

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Jacqueline A. Gramann
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

August 1997

In cooperation with the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

PS 026466

Educational programs of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

Texas Agricultural Extension Service • Zerle L. Carpenter, Director • The Texas A&M University System • College Station, Texas

Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Family Development & Resource Management
305 History Building, Mailstop 2251
College Station, TX 77843-2251
(409) 845-3850

Evaluation Results & Final Report for the Preservice Training for Child Care Workers Project

Sarah L. Anderson, Ed.D., CFCS
Project Director, Associate Professor,
& Extension Program Leader
Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Jacqueline A. Gramann, Ed.M.
Project Manager—Preservice Training
for Child Care Workers
Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Acknowledgments

Those who have been involved in putting this project together include:

- Jacqueline Gramann, Project Manager, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- Sarah L. Anderson, Project Director, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- William Carver, Program Development Specialist, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
- Diane Welch, Project Director, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- Sharon Eppler, Secretary, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- Susan Lee, Editor, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- And for review comments: Angela McCorkle, Pam Brown, Helga Gilbert, and Mary Marshall, Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Pilot Project Counties and Family and Consumer Science Agents:

1. Hartley County D-1, Cheryl A. Pickard
2. Lipscomb County D-1, Gwendolyne Franks
3. Dawson County D-2, Peggy L. Hughes
4. Swisher County D-2, Ronda D. Alexander
5. Parker County D-3, Dona L. Brewer
6. Wise County D-3, Renee C. Sanders
7. Young County D-3, Sheryl Mahaney
8. Denton County D-4, Nancy Brown
9. Angelina County D-5, Jennifer Cumbie
10. Panola County D-5, Margaret Caldwell
11. Crockett County D-6, Tedra L. Ulmer
12. Pecos County D-6, Susan P. Bennett
13. Brown County D-7, Elaine C. Soukup
14. Llano County D-7, Marilyn M. Hale
15. Menard/Mason Counties D-7*, Kathlene M. Aycock
16. Eastland County D-8, Janet Thomas
17. Leon County D-8, Maria S. Curry
18. Navarro County D-8, Rita J. Baxter
19. Gillespie County D-10, Sandra K. Wuest
20. Guadalupe County D-10, Cara N. Decker
21. Uvalde County D-10, Carol S. Easters
22. De Witt County D-11, Diana Weise
23. Matagorda County D-11, Barbara Sulak
24. San Patricio/Aransas Counties D-11*, Kathy Farrow
25. Dimmit County D-12, Gail White

* has one FCS county agent for both counties

Table of Contents

Program Background and Methodology 1
- The Project 1
- Pilot Study 3
- Evaluation 4

The Evaluation Report 7
- Methodology 7
- Demographics and Background Information 7
- Results of Telephone Survey 12
- Additional Learner Responses 16
- Additional Responses from the Survey 16
- Evaluation Summary 18

Conclusions 19
- Kit and Program Manual 19
- The Project 19
- County Collaboration 20
- In Summary 21

References 23

Appendix 25
- Open-Ended Responses From Participant Learners 27
- Open-Ended Responses from Survey Participants 29

Program Background and Methodology

In recent years, Texas and the rest of the nation have begun to realize many changes in work and family life. The declining economic status of families, the increasing number of households headed by maternal, single parents, changing attitudes toward women in the workforce, and welfare reform are resulting in the large-scale employment of women in the workforce. A survey reported recently in the national news has 80% of Americans approving of both parents working outside of the home. These developments have produced an increased utilization of child care services and a need for qualified providers of child care.

Current research on the brain development of children suggests a critical need in providing consistent, quality care for our nation's youngest children. The Families and Work Institute reports there is a "quiet crisis" for the 12 million children under the age of three in the United States.

Child care providers in Texas are now required to obtain eight hours of preservice training before starting work in child care. In addressing this new regulation to improve child care in Texas, it was noted that rural areas of the state did not have easy access to child care provider training.

Rural Texas

This project was developed as a collaborative project of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to meet the needs of rural child care providers for training, improve the care of children in Texas, and strengthen community collaborations in the process.

The Project

Preservice Training for Child Care Workers is designed to help workers meet the new requirement for eight hours of training before starting child care work. To accomplish this goal, resources were reviewed from many professional outlets. A mix of videos and readings were selected to create an interactive self-study kit with a program manual that could be implemented easily in rural areas of Texas.

Kit Resources

Kit selection criteria included cost, length, source/credentials, demonstrated high quality, up-to-date, appropriate for Texas, equipment needed to use, appropriate for self-study, about ninth grade reading level, visually interesting, in child care age range, and in one of the

designated study areas. Study areas were developmental stages, age-appropriate activities, positive guidance, fostering self-esteem, health and safety, positive interactions, supervision, and abuse/neglect. Final selections of the twenty-one resources used in the kit were based on quality, authoritative source, diversity of sources, cost, illustration of all study areas, and children's ages represented.

Resources

Keeping Children Safe

1. Video: "The ABCs of Clean," The Soap and Detergent Association.
2. *Healthy Young Children*, Abby Shapiro Kendrick, Roxane Kaufmann, and Katherine P. Messenger, National Association for the Education of Young Children.
3. "Talking to Kids About AIDS," Texas Agricultural Extension Service.
4. State brochure for reporting child abuse.
5. State Standards and Guidelines.
6. Video: "Feeding Children Well: A Pyramid for Preschoolers," Texas Nutrition Education and Training Program.

Positive Interactions

1. *Behavior Guidance for Infants and Toddlers*, Alice S. Honig, Southern Early Childhood Association.
2. *Behavior Guidance for Three and Four Year Old Children*, Jeanette C. Nunnelley, Southern Early Childhood Association.
3. Video: "Discipline: Appropriate Guidance of Young Children," National Association for the Education of Young Children.
4. *Discipline in School-age Care*, Dale Borman Fink, School-age Notes.

The Role of the Teacher

1. Video: "Appropriate Curriculum for Young Children: The Role of the Teacher," National Association for the Education of Young Children.
2. *Why Teach?*, Joanne Hendrick, National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Child Development

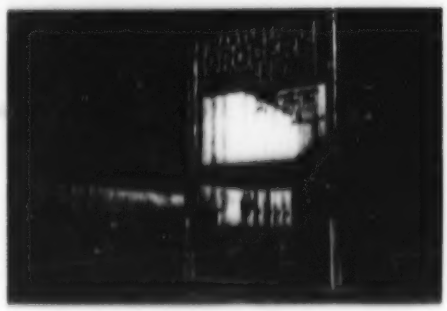
1. Chart #1: "A Glance at Child Growth and Development," Texas Agricultural Extension Service.
2. Chart #2: "A Glance at Youth Growth and Development," Texas Agricultural Extension Service.
3. Video: "Flexible, Fearful, or Feisty: The Different Temperaments of Infants and Toddlers," The Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers, California Department of Education.
4. Video: "Between School-time and Home-time: Planning Quality Activities for School-age Child Care Programs," New York State Council on Children & Families and Wellesley College School-age Child Care Project.
5. Brochure: "Toys: Tools for Learning," National Association for the Education of Young Children.
6. Brochure: "Play is FUNdamental," National Association for the Education of Young Children.
7. *Bright Ideas: Handmade Toys*, E. Anne Eddowes, Southern Early Childhood Association.
8. *The Right Stuff*, Martha B. Bronson, National Association for the Education of Young Children.
9. *School-Age Ideas and Activities for After School Programs*, Karen Haas-Foletta and Michele Cogley School-age Notes.

Children, was written to provide an outline, self-study steps, study questions, and to highlight key learning points. Four sections were developed for the needed study areas: Keeping Children Safe—Why Good Child Care is Important; Positive Interactions—How Do I Guide Each Child?; The Role of the Teacher—When Does Learning Happen?; and Child Development: What is an Appropriate Activity?

Information was based loosely on points drawn from the Child Development Associate degree program and ***Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs***, revised edition, 1997, published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The Families and Work Institute has issued broad guidelines for the care of young children in ***Rethinking the Brain***, 1997, by Rima Shore. ***The Child Care Provider Program: Preservice Training for Child Care Workers*** kit and program manual, ***Improving the Care of Children***, reinforces these points in the training. Guidelines include these points: ensure health, safety, and good nutrition; develop a warm, caring relationship with children; respond to children's cues; recognize that each child is unique; talk, read, and sing to children; encourage safe exploration and play; use discipline to teach; establish routines; parental involvement in child care encouraged; and limit television.

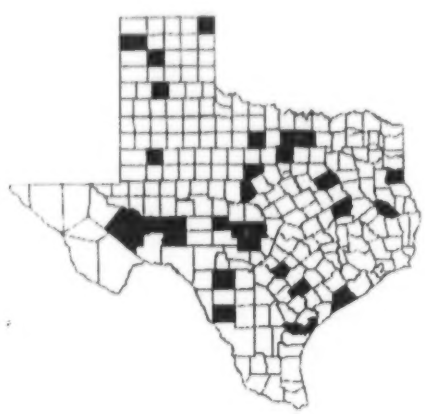
Key learnings are repeated more than once in different ways in the self-study kit. It is assumed that this preservice training is the first training in child care that the learner has had. Learnings must be reinforced and the visual experience of the videos, study of the readings, and study questions are necessary for in-depth learning to occur.



Hartley, Texas

Pilot Study

Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services identified seventy-seven counties as needing access to training. The Texas Agricultural Extension Service contacted the county Family and Consumer Science agents for participants in the pilot phase of the project. A sample covering nearly every Extension district and Protective and Regulatory Services region was drawn. Twenty-seven counties piloted the project from January to June of 1997.



Pilot Counties

The county Extension agents received a facilitator's guide, marketing information, including a poster, and training to implement the pilot project. Supporting forms, a pretest, post-test, and check-out form, were developed to solicit information for the evaluation phase of the project. Marketing the program was a key element, and a handout was developed at agent request. Collaboration between agencies was strongly encouraged.

Marketing Poster

Twenty-five self-study program kits were packaged into plastic containers sturdy enough for shipping and to be checked-out by the learner. The Extension agents decided appropriate implementation procedures in their counties. The agent provided a copy of the program manual to each learner.

The check-out fee of $25, of which $10 would be refunded when the kit was returned, was recommended to fund broken tape replacement and lost reading resources. Kit value was placed at about $300. Agents were encouraged to carefully check-out kits. A final cost of $15 per learner was viewed as in line with all day child care conference costs.

The self-study questions in the program manual provided the test of knowledge used in the agent's check of work done before the certificate of completion was issued to the learner.

Returning Kit to County Extension Office

Statewide news releases, radio spots, presentations, and a homepage on the Internet were developed.

Evaluation

As each county was contacted for progress reports, a questionnaire was developed to evaluate the project. Due to county agents' time schedules and long distances between the mostly rural counties, the questionnaire survey

was conducted by telephone during the summer of 1997. Texas A&M University's Public Policy Research Institute conducted the telephone survey and analysis of all data for the project.

Learner with Kit and Certificate of Completion

The telephone survey contacted three groups involved with the use of the kit: county Extension agents involved in the project through the pilot phase; licensing representatives who were reported to have collaborated closely with the project; and child care center directors who had direct knowledge of the kit and participant learners.

The learner's pretest and post-test of general child care knowledge and usability of the kit supplied data for the kit evaluation. The check-out form provided data for demographic information about the participant learners.

The Evaluation Report

Methodology

The Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) of Texas A&M University conducted a telephone survey and compiled the evaluation report for the *Preservice Training for Child Care Workers* pilot project during July and August of 1997. In addition, PPRI analyzed data from check-out forms, pretests, and post-tests completed by the 70 participants during the pilot phase of the child care training program. A list of names and telephone numbers of 48 potential respondents, including 24 Texas Agricultural Extension Service (TAEX) county family and consumer science agents, 18 day care directors, and six licensing representatives from the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (DPRS) was compiled. PPRI was able to complete 45 interviews with county agents, day care directors, and licensing representatives, with two bad numbers and one unqualified respondent. The completion rate for the telephone survey was 100% (45 out of 45).

Demographics and Background Information

The check-out form requested demographic information from 70 pilot project participants. For instance, 98.6% of the sample were female and 1.4% were male (see Figure 1).

Concerning the ages of participants, 32.9% were 16–22 years of age; 14.3% were ages 23–29; 25.7% were 30–39 years of age; and 27.1% were age 40 and above (see Figure 2).

The education level of the sample listed 2.9% had some grade school; 15.9% had some high school; 36.2% were high school graduates; 39.1% had some college; and 5.8% were college graduates (see Figure 3).

The racial/ethnic background of the sample was two-thirds (67.6%) Anglo or White; one-fourth (25%) Hispanic; 4.4% African American; 1.5% Native American; and 1.5% other (see Figure 4).

Regarding the annual household income of program participants, 40% were less than $15,000; 18.5% were between $15,000 and $25,000; 26.2% were between $25,000 and $40,000; while 15.4% were over $40,000 (see Figure 5).

The sample of 70 pilot project participants were then asked about various aspects of the training. For instance, a majority of respondents (51.4%) indicated taking the training at work; 40% reported taking it at home; while 8.6% of respondents indicated taking the training at an Extension class (see Figure 6).

Nearly three-fourths (71.4%) of respondents stated taking the training at the request of their employer, compared to 14.3% who did so because they were looking for work (see Figure 7). On another item, two-thirds (67.1%) of program participants indicated having experience with children through babysitting their own family or friends, while 54.3% reported having experience with children at a child care center.

Also, respondents were asked where they first heard about the training. Program participants first became aware of the pilot project through the following sources: work (48.6%), newspaper (24.3%), Extension (12.9%), friend (10%), and poster (2.9%) (see Figure 8).

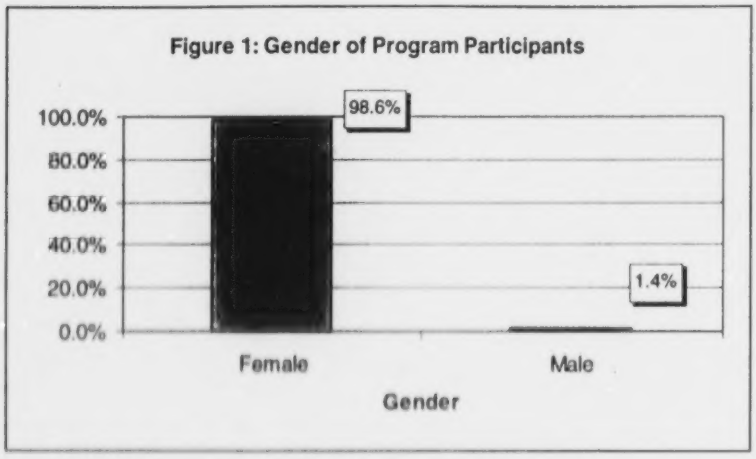


Figure 1: Gender of Program Participants
100.0%
80.0%
60.0%
40.0%
20.0%
0.0%
98.6%
1.4%
Female
Male
Gender

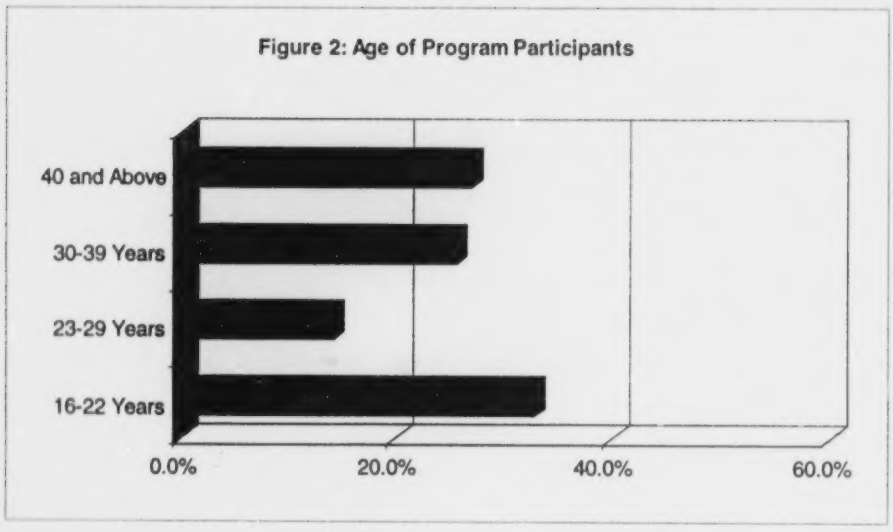


Figure 2: Age of Program Participants
40 and Above
30-39 Years
23-29 Years
16-22 Years
0.0%
20.0%
40.0%
60.0%

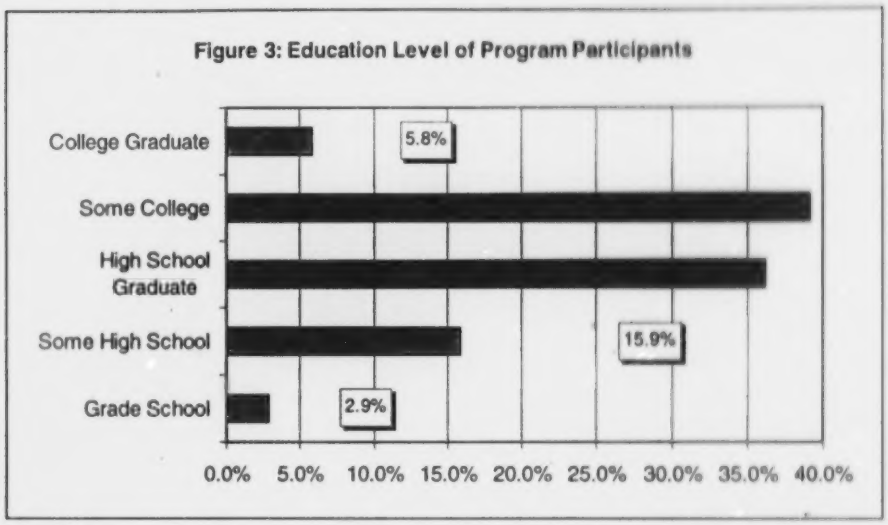


Figure 3: Education Level of Program Participants
College Graduate
Some College
High School Graduate
Some High School
Grade School
5.8%
15.9%
2.9%
0.0% 5.0% 10.0% 15.0% 20.0% 25.0% 30.0% 35.0% 40.0%

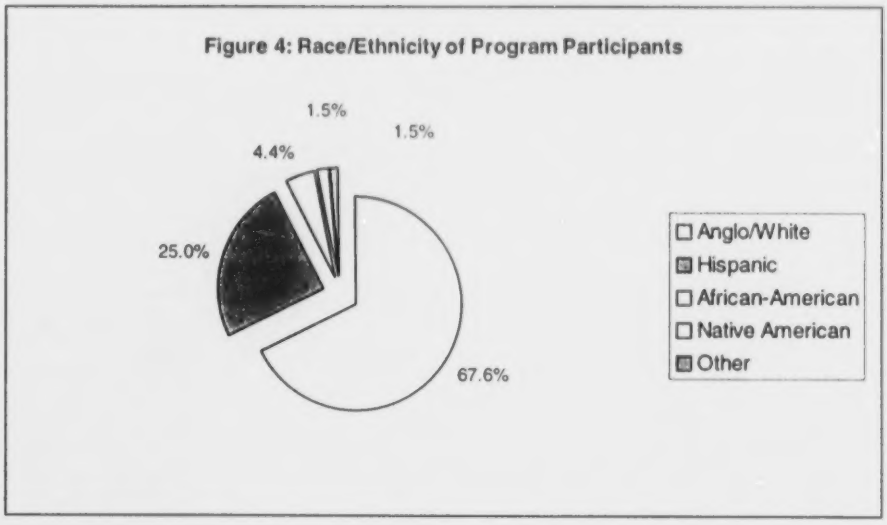


Figure 4: Race/Ethnicity of Program Participants
1.5%
1.5%
4.4%
25.0%
67.6%
Anglo/White
Hispanic
African-American
Native American
Other

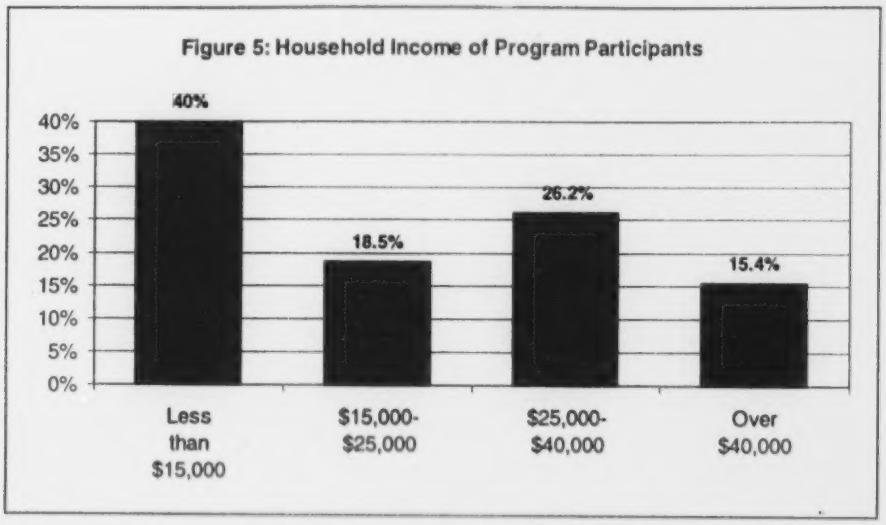


Figure 5: Household Income of Program Participants
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
40%
18.5%
26.2%
15.4%
Less than $15,000
$15,000-$25,000
$25,000-$40,000
Over $40,000

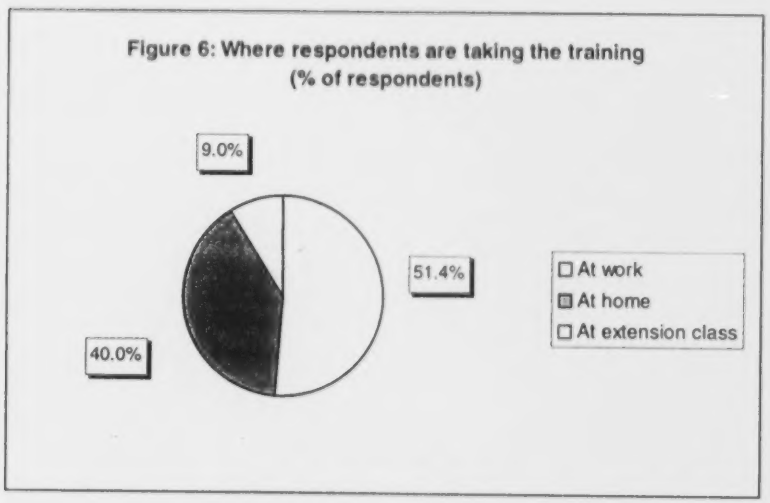


Figure 6: Where respondents are taking the training
(% of respondents)
9.0%
51.4%
40.0%
At work
At home
At extension class

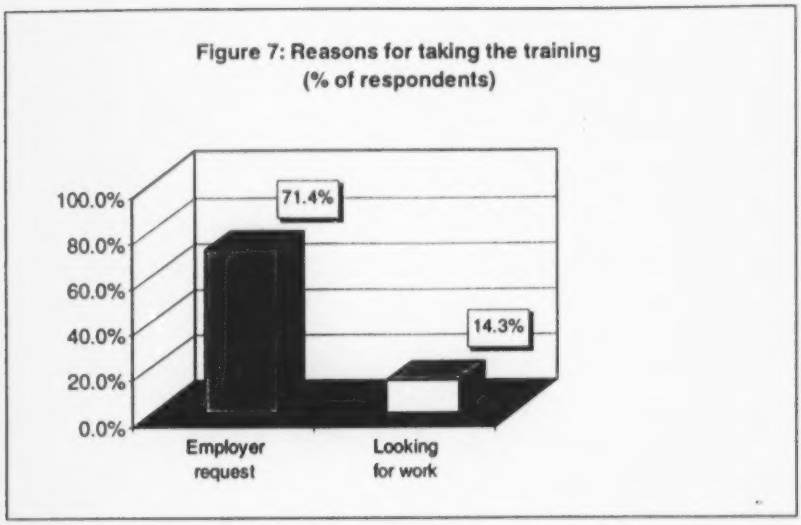


Figure 7: Reasons for taking the training
(% of respondents)
100.0%
80.0%
60.0%
40.0%
20.0%
0.0%
71.4%
14.3%
Employer request
Looking for work

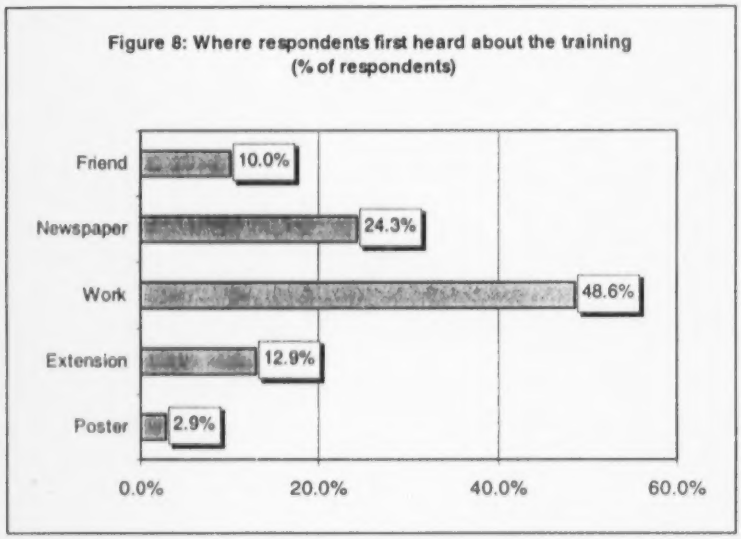


Figure 8: Where respondents first heard about the training
(% of respondents)
Friend
Newspaper
Work
Extension
Poster
10.0%
24.3%
48.6%
12.9%
2.9%
0.0%
20.0%
40.0%
60.0%

Matagorda County

Results of Telephone Survey

This section of the report focuses on findings of the telephone survey which was completed by 23 TAEX county agents (51.1% of participants), 16 child care directors (35.6%), and six licensing representatives from the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (13.3%). One major purpose of the survey was to determine the ratings by respondents of the 22 items in the training kit and to determine how each item met their expectations for training child care workers.

First, however, the sample of 45 respondents was asked questions concerning their experiences with child care training. For example, 82.2% of respondents indicated they had taken a child care training class, while 64.4% had taught a child care training class, and 48.9% had supervised a child care training.

Over one-third (37.8%) of respondents reported personally facilitating a small group training using the training kit. This included ten child care center directors and seven county Extension agents (see Table 1).

Further, nearly nine of every ten respondents (88.9%) felt that the training kit covered basic knowledge that is needed for someone working in child care (see Table 1).

Table 1. Views of Respondents Involved in Various Aspects of Child Care (% of Respondents)

1.	Ever taken a child care training class	82.2%
2.	Ever taught a child care training class	64.4%
3.	Ever supervised a child care training	48.9%
4.	Personally facilitated a small group training using the training kit	37.8%
5.	Felt that the training kit covered basic knowledge that is needed for someone working in child care	88.9%

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The main part of the telephone survey involved asking respondents about the 22 items, which included books, videos, charts, brochures, and the project program manual, contained in the training kit. Each respondent was asked to rate the 22 items as excellent, good, fair, or poor for meeting their expectations for training child care workers.

There were a number of findings concerning analysis of the 22 items of the training kit. First, over one-third (37.8%) of the sample indicated a lack of familiarity with some of the items, while 22.2% reported being familiar with none of the 22 items in the training kit. Thus, only 40% of respondents were familiar enough with all 22 items to venture opinions regarding their expectations for training child care workers. Accordingly, responses to items with which the sample was not familiar were recorded as not applicable.

The other major finding was that of those respondents who were familiar with the items in the training kit, the overwhelming majority viewed each of the 22 items as either excellent or good for meeting their expectations for training child care workers.

In fact, there were four items which yielded exclusively excellent or good responses from the sample. Over 70% of the sample felt that the state brochure for reporting child abuse, the video entitled *The ABC's of Clean*, and the project program manual entitled *Improving the Care of Children* were either excellent or good.

For 12 other items in the training kit, between 60% and 70% of respondents felt they were either excellent or good. Further, between 50% and 60% of respondents indicated that six other items were either excellent or good. The book entitled *The Right Stuff* was rated either excellent or good by 48.9% of the sample, while 51.1% were not familiar with the book.

In summary, if familiar with the items in the training kit, the sample of respondents rated them quite favorably for meeting their expectations for training child care workers. Table 2 illustrates the sample's responses to each of the 22 items on a rating scale of excellent-good-fair-poor.

Table 2. Views of Respondents Concerning Resources in the Preservice Training Kit (% of Respondents)

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
1.	Video: *The ABC's of Clean*	42.2	28.9			28.9
2.	Book: *Healthy Young Children*	26.7	33.3	2.2		37.8
3.	Brochure: *Talking to Kids about AIDS*	17.8	37.8	8.9	2.2	33.3
4.	State brochure for reporting child abuse	35.6	37.8			26.7
5.	State standards & guidelines	28.9	37.8	6.7		26.7
6.	Video: *Feeding Children Well: A Pyramid for Preschoolers*	40.0	28.9	2.2		28.9
7.	Book: *Behavior Guidance for Infants & Toddlers*	33.3	31.1	4.4	2.2	28.9
8.	Book: *Behavior Guidance for Three &Four Year Old Children*	28.9	33.3	4.4	2.2	31.1
9.	Video: *Discipline: Appropriate Guidance of Young Children*	33.3	35.6	4.4		26.7
10.	Book: *Discipline in School-Age Care*	20.0	37.8	6.7	2.2	33.3
11.	Video: *Appropriate Curriculum for Young Children*	26.7	24.4	6.7		42.2
12.	Book: *Why Teach*	22.2	33.3	4.4		40.0
13.	Chart #1: *A Glance at Child Growth & Development*	40.0	26.7	4.4		28.9
14.	Chart #2: *A Glance at Youth Growth & Development*	40.0	22.2	4.4		33.3
15.	Video: *Flexible, Fearful or Feisty*	35.6	17.8	4.4		42.2
16.	Video: *Between School-time & Home-time*	17.8	37.8	2.2		42.2
17.	Brochure: *Toys: Tools for Learning*	26.7	42.2	4.4		26.7
18.	Brochure: *Play is FUNdamental*	22.2	40.0	2.2		35.6
19.	Book: *Bright Ideas: Handmade Toys*	42.2	24.4	4.4		28.9
20.	Book: *The Right Stuff*	26.7	22.2			51.1
21.	Book: *School-age Ideas & Activities for After School Programs*	28.9	35.6	4.4		31.1
22.	Program Manual: *Improving the Care of Children*	28.9	42.2			28.9

The sample was then asked to agree or disagree with each of two statements. Disregarding the 22.2% of respondents who were not familiar enough with the training kit to venture opinions on these two statements, 97.1% of respondents agreed that the information in the training was understandable, and 100% of respondents agreed that the information in the training was useful.

The same questions were asked of the learner participants in the post-test, and 100% agreed that "the information in the training was understandable" and that "the information in the training was useful."

On other items in the telephone survey, more than two-thirds (68.9%) of the sample felt that the interactive aspects of the training made it more usable (26.7% were not applicable).

Child care group offers training cours

Parker County

Less than one-third (28.9% or 13 of 45) of respondents indicated they had personally observed new employees using the training kit in their child care settings. Nearly all of those particular respondents (92.3% or 12 of 13) felt that the new employees interacted skillfully with the children (see Table 3).

Table 3. Examples of How New Employees Interacted Skillfully with the Children

- Very helpful in transitioning new worker.
- Food pyramid material was used, and the attention span was met.
- They are making eye contact with the children.
- Everything was fine.
- Everything went smoothly.
- Instead of TV, set up little stations for making the things in the books (handmade toys).
- Really gave the new people an idea of how children behave, and they handled things well.
- Activities used in classroom were utilized well.
- Two year-olds. Used different techniques (biting, teething). Utilized techniques well.
- Enjoyed sharing, taking kids outside, meal time and cleanliness ideas.
- In the classroom with different age kids.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Specific comments, such as "They are making eye contact with the children," "Instead of TV, set up little stations for making the things in the books," and "Really gave the new people an idea of how children behave and they handled things well" illustrate the potential for preservice training to improve the care of children.

Additional Learner Responses

Seventy learner participants in the pilot project filled out a short pretest and post-test before and after the preservice training. TAEX sent numbered copies of these 70 questionnaires to PPRI for data tabulation and analysis.

First, participants answered a series of four statements on a true-false scale. Regarding the false statement, "Child development does not have much to do with the children's everyday activities," 97.1% of the respondents in the pre-test and 92.9% in the post-test answered false. A very high percentage of respondents (97.1% in the pretest and 98.6% in the post-test) felt the true statement, "When I see children practicing new skills, I should say something encouraging," was true. Less than one-half of respondents in both the pre-test (37.7%) and post-test (45.7%) felt that the false statement, "Morning is the time of day teaching should happen," was false. Finally, nearly all respondents (97.1% in the pre-test and 95.7% in the post-test) indicated that the true statement, "The health and safety of young children is the most important concern of a child care worker," was true.

The learner participants were also asked to agree or disagree with a series of statements. For example, 92.8% of respondents in the pre-test and 98.6% in the post-test agreed that, "Childhood is an important stage of life."

The final statement of the post-test had 100% of the sample agreeing with, "The training has helped me understand my role as a child care worker."

Additional Responses from the Survey

A majority of respondents (57.8%) felt it would be helpful to have the program manual available in Spanish while 35.6% felt it would not be helpful. This finding is reflective of the substantial portion of the state population who speak Spanish.

In addition, 91.1% of the sample felt it was helpful to have the training kit available for check-out at the county Extension office. Further, over four-fifths of respondents (82.2%) indicated that the training kit was marketed well, compared to 11.1% who felt otherwise.

The remaining questions in the telephone survey were asked only of the 23 TAEX county agents. Of the 25 family and consumer science agents participating in the pilot phase of the project, one left her position in Leon County early in the pilot, and the agent in Uvalde County left before the evaluation phase.

When asked about a variety of factors which may have prevented child care workers from using the training kit, the main reason given by 34.8% of county agents was that the kit was already checked out. Factors of cost and not enough time for kit use and check-out allowance were mentioned by 30.4% of county agents. No county agent felt that sole use of the training kit in an Extension office precluded child care workers from using the kit (see Table 4).

Table 4. Possible Reasons Why Child Care Workers May Not Have Used the Training Kit (% of County Agents)

	% Yes	% No
1. Cost	30.4	69.6
2. Not enough time for kit use & checkout allowance	30.4	65.2
3. Already checked out	34.8	60.9
4. Used only in Extension Office	0.0	100.0

County agents indicated that, on average, child care workers would have to travel 80 miles for such training if the kit was not available at the county Extension office (with a low of 10 miles and a high of 180 miles).

Over three-fourths of county agents (78.3%) reported there were new child care workers in their county. On average, county agents indicated that 50% of these new child care workers were able to complete the training kit during the pilot period.

The sample of 23 county agents also stated that, on average, there were 27 child care facilities in their county, ranging from 1 to 200 facilities. In addition, county agents indicated that, on average, 77.7% of these facilities were licensed or registered (with a range from 28.0% to 100.0%), compared to 29.5% which were thought to be unregistered family homes (ranging from 0.0% to 72.0%).

In the final section of the telephone survey, county agents were asked about a variety of ways in which they may have advertised the training kit. All county agents (100%) reported contacting the child care facility; 95.7% used a newspaper; 91.3% used posters; 82.6% met with child care professionals; and 65.2% used radio. By contrast, however, only 4.3% of county agents reported using television for advertising the training kit (see Table 5).

Table 5. Possible Ways Training Kit May Have Been Advertised (% of County Agents)

	% Yes
1. Newspaper	95.7
2. Radio	65.2
3. Television	4.3
4. Posters	91.3
5. Contacting the child care facility	100.0
6. Meeting with the child care professionals	82.6

Swisher County

Evaluation Summary

In summary, most participants using the self-study kit were female, 16–22 years of age, had some college training, a household income of less than $15,000, and were Anglo or White. Hispanics represented the next largest group.

Most received the preservice training at work, at their employer's request, and first heard about the self-study kit at work.

All involved with the project rated it useful and understandable. Survey participants rated it 97.1% understandable and 100% useful. Learner participants rated it 100% understandable and 100% useful.

Three-fourths of the survey participants found the interactive aspects made the kit more usable.

Improving the Care of Children, the program manual developed for the self-study kit, was rated as excellent or good by all survey participants who were familiar with it.

After the eight hour training, 100% of the learners agreed with the statement that, "The training has helped me understand my role as a child care worker."

Hartley County

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Conclusions

Kit and Program Manual

The ratings and verbal responses to all involved with the kit and program manual have been overwhelmingly positive. Open-ended comments are listed in the appendix.

Some comments from learner participants include: "I learned a lot of things, even things that I didn't know about kids and childhood care working," "The information was well presented, organized. I specifically thought the information on how to teach was helpful," "By me taking this course and being a mother of three, it really helped understand a little more. I really enjoyed it," and "I really enjoyed the training because I feel it is important so I can do the best I can with the children I work with and my own children!"

Comments from survey participants included: "Very useful. CDA program used it. Went together very well," "Self-paced. Information was good. New information," and "Everyone should see excellent, good refresher course: *Flexible, Fearful, Feisty*, excellent!"

Most of the negative comments indicated that it has too much reading and is repetitive. More experienced participants will find it repetitive out of necessity, since it is geared to a young, inexperienced child care worker.

The program manual has been revised to include updated points in the "Keeping Children Safe" section and facilitator information at the back. It is recommended that a copy of the manual section be provided for each participant.

One of the outcomes of requiring preservice training will probably be an increased awareness of safety in the child care setting. *U.S. News & World Report* (August 4, 1997) brings to light "Day-care Dangers" in reporting how day care does not do enough to avoid harm. Getting knowledge to providers can improve this situation.

The Project

Many implementation concerns were a reflection of the need to obtain information from the pilot phase for evaluation. The extensive check-out form, pretest, post-test, and follow-ups do not have to be used in normal lending of educational resources. During the pilot phase of the project, most check-outs were made to a center director. It is important for the person lending out the kit to have a general knowledge of how the self-study works.

The pretest and post-test asked for very basic child care knowledge, and one question was not clear. It was noted that at least one learner answered incorrectly and then wrote in the correct response to the side. This question has been rewritten for those who might use the forms in the future.

The self-study steps include questions for the learner to answer. These questions are checked before the certificate of completion is issued. A general knowledge of child development and what is in the kit would be helpful for the person issuing the certificate.

Translating the program manual, *Improving the Care of Children*, into an English and Spanish document would help in increasing the understandability factor for a large segment of the Texas population. Although understandability overall was rated high, some county Extension agents expressed this concern during the pilot phase.

County Collaboration

Timing was one of the biggest problems in the pilot phase of this project. Most agents reported that there were very few new child care workers during the spring of the year. "Time frame hiring vs. time frame pilot period." Numbers are not what they could have been with a summer to fall pilot period. A longer time in the field to allow for marketing and implementation of a new product would have been better as well.

Nearly all of the counties were very rural. They do not have many child care providers who are licensed and registered. Of those who exist, the numbers of new child care workers is low at any given time. Data reported indicates that six counties trained 100% of the new workers in those counties. Agents reported providing the training to 50% of new child care workers overall.

Table 6. Participant Learners in Each County During Pilot Project

District 1	Hartley County	0
	Lipscomb	0
District 2	Dawson	1
	Swisher	2
District 3	Parker	11
	Wise	11
	Young	0
District 4	Denton	12
District 5	Angelina	1
	Panola	4
District 6	Crockett	0
	Pecos	3
District 7	Brown	3
	Llano	2
	Menard/Mason	2
District 8	Eastland	0
	Navarro	4
District 10	Gillespie	0
	Guadalupe	0
	Uvalde	0
District 11	De Witt	2
	Matagorda	7
	San Patricio/Aransas	3
District 12	Dimmit	2

Table 6 shows participation by county. Sixteen counties had learner participants. Eight counties reported no participants as of early June 1997. Most county Extension agents have said that the kit resources will help them put together more training opportunities for child care providers.

One county, Denton County, is suburban. Its use reflected the problems of using the self-study kit in an urban county. The kit was only checked-out to centers because of the perception that the kit may not be returned otherwise. Marketing was done on a limited basis.

In the rural setting, the kit met the needs of providers by being available from an Extension office setting, a more comfortable driving distance than what would be available otherwise.

Many collaborations between state and other agencies are a positive outcome of the project. The appendix contains a listing of agencies. Head Start programs used the training kit, often more than specific collaborations show.

Nineteen county Extension agents reported meetings with child care professionals during the pilot phase. Regional child care provider training conferences involving several counties have continued to be planned by Extension agents during the summer months. At least two agents reported special sessions about the preservice training program would be featured. The county Extension agents reported high numbers of marketing contacts. A second round of newspaper articles was needed in the pilot phase of the project to remind caregivers of its availability.

In Summary

The Preservice Training for Child Care Workers is a well-received program by Texas child care providers. "Very helpful in transitioning new worker." "Enjoyed the kit, but need more kits. Other counties were calling to borrow theirs. They had a waiting list."

Going into the fall, Extension agents report needing more kits, and other counties want to start the program, as child care providers are calling to request the training. More kits are needed for availability to all counties in Texas through the Extension library. Counties with high demand for training can benefit by having a kit available and also as a resource for county Extension agents to plan more continuing education programs.

As the momentum for marketing and collaboration of the project has built up, it is expected to be a continuing success in rural Texas counties.

References

The Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program, 1341 G Street, N.W., 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20005-3105.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs, revised edition, 1997, National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Rethinking the Brain, Rima Shore, 1997, Families and Work Institute.

U.S. News & World Report, August 4, 1997.

Appendix

Open-Ended Responses From Participant Learners

Comments

- Everyone should see this that is in child care. Most of it reminds you of good old common sense.
- The information was well presented, organized. I specifically thought the information on how to teach was helpful.
- Child development: "What is an appropriate activity" was helpful to me. Videos were excellent.
- Thought this training seemed a bit tedious. I feel it will be helpful.
- I have learned a lot of useful information.
- I am glad I took this training because before me like a care giver.
- Too much reading material. Good videos.
- The videos were the best. Reading was too long. Idea: send reading out prior to classes and more videos. Consider total course in videos: much better.
- Like the way it is.
- Too much reading and not enough time to do it. Videos were very enjoyable.
- Less reading.
- Too much reading. Videos very good. Need more question, answer activities.
- We enjoyed the class.
- I really enjoyed the training because I feel it is important so I can do the best I can with the children I work with and my own children!
- I have enjoyed the training. It was very helpful.
- I learned a lot of things, even things that I didn't know about kids and childhood care working.
- We learned that centers help boredom of free time. Children can move from one center to another and be occupied.
- The training was very useful to me as a day care center worker.
- Class is good. Film good too.
- Very good study program.
- Space used in video was different than our day care. We have lots of space for more freedom and learning.
- I have learned a lot from taking this class.
- I cannot say enough good things about this material!
- The video "Flexible, Fearful and Feisty" was informative and enjoyable.
- No.
- I feel parents should take this course. There is material which could be used for better parenting.
- The material was informative and useful. Very helpful in my line of work.
- The videos were the most useful and understanding to me!
- I enjoyed the videos!
- By me taking this course and being a mother of three it really helped understand a little more. I really enjoyed it.
- Everything in the videos was common sense!
- This was very informative!
- This kit has many good materials that every child care worker can benefit from. I really enjoyed using it.
- This kit contains a wonderful collection of learning materials for both the potential child care worker and the experienced child care staff member. Thanks.
- Very repetitive.

Open-Ended Responses from Survey Participants

Comments Made by Survey Participants About the Training Kit Resources

- It was excellent. Glad to be able to check it out.
- Everyone should see excellent, good refresher course: "Flex, Fear, Feisty", excellent!
- Liked it. More time with it. Liked taking it home with them.
- Scared them off. Too overwhelming. Too, too much reading.
- Very good. Background information excellent.
- One of the best curriculums available.
- Helpful. Counties need more kits.
- Excellent!
- Didn't have any comments made just yet. Only two respondents to the kit so far.
- Very good!
- Mixed emotions. Some thought it was very repetitive.
- Wanted to keep a copy. Would like to buy it.
- Very happy. Didn't have to travel. Material was very useful. Videos allowed them to work with parents in Head Start.
- Great, the videos were the best resource. Books used just for reinforcement because they were somewhat repetitive.
- None yet.
- Needed it longer. More needed about what goes on in class room.
- Really informative.
- None really other than it was excellent.
- Very good. Videos were good, another lady was noncommittal. It was OK.
- Very helpful. Excellent program.
- Really loved the toys book and discipline book/video.
- They loved the videos.
- Very thorough, but too long.
- Very useful. CDA program used it. Went together very well.
- Loved video with book. Many teachers are using the ideas.
- Too much reading to do. Was enjoyed though.
- Have not heard anything.
- Has heard from county agents that it is great, but has no direct experience with it.
- None. Does not know anybody who has used it.
- Heard that all was good.
- Excellent kit he has heard.
- Only used pieces. Pleased.
- The two that checked it out were very pleased.
- They were excellent. It was well put together. They were very useful.
- It was complete and concise. Up to date. Very good!
- A lot was basic, but a good review. Activities were excellent. Liked that they could work at their own speed. Excellent overall.
- Was good. Easy access to the kit.
- They enjoyed it. They could discuss it and recap. It was informal. They could go through it step by step.

- Self-paced. Information was good. New information.
- Needed it when they started their facilities. Very good.
- Very basic. Good for first time day care workers. Good to have a kit put together with materials about young children.

Examples of How New Employees Interacted Skillfully With the Children

- Very helpful in transitioning new worker.
- Food pyramid material was used and the attention span was met.
- They are making eye contact with the children.
- Everything was fine.
- Everything went smoothly.
- Instead of TV, set up little stations for making the things in the books (handmade toys).
- Really gave the new people an idea of how children behave and they handled things well.
- Activities used in classroom were utilized well.
- Two year-olds. Used different techniques (biting, teething). Utilized techniques well.
- Enjoyed sharing, taking kids outside, meal time and cleanliness ideas.
- In the classroom with different age kids.

Arrangements for Check Out Which Would have Worked Better

- There needs to be more persons available to be authorized to check out the kit. It was hard to get hold of their agent to check it out.
- Wish they had it at licensing office. She would love to be able to use it and teach it.

Comments Made by Survey Participants About the Pilot Project, the Program Manual, Resources, or Method of Resources Delivery to Child Care Workers

- Put together well. Hopefully next year like to get other groups involved.
- Excellent program, even experienced professionals can benefit from the kit.
- More funding, public awareness.
- Wish they were bilingual. But, they need to "tone down" the readings. The people in the area are not as "educated" as in other areas and they had a hard time with it.
- Excellent. Very well put together.
- Enjoyed the kit, but need more kits. Other counties were calling to borrow theirs. They had a waiting list.
- Excellent material. Participants are eager to use the curriculum. Very well put together.
- Wonderful ideas. Glad it was available in the county.
- Well worth the time and trouble. Needs to be available in more counties.
- Everything fine.
- Everything was great.
- Appreciate the materials targeted for rural counties. Quality of the materials was excellent.
- Child care workers needed it for more than two weeks. Really just loved the videos. Book sort of redundant.
- Plan to implement it real soon.
- Everything was fine. Need more than one kit available for check out.

- Enjoyed having it but there needs to be more kits. She had several to train and not enough time.
- Like it because it is available and convenient to them as they can use it on their leisure.
- None.
- Review the "hazards" sections. They were a bit lacking.
- Biggest complaint was the inability to check out the kit when the agent is not around. Videos were good. Overall, it was OK.
- Excellent! They are requiring new employees to watch the videos and participate in the training. Wonderful!
- Disappointed in the test, not challenging at all.
- Usually does the videos first because she finds that people get bored with the books too fast. The videos really catch their interest. The books become good reinforcement.
- Some way to get a copy of his own. He would like some or all of the material "hands-on". He says it was too long because you only have two weeks for check out and it is not enough time to sit through the program all at once.
- Have to train substitutes. Wanted to purchase their own kit for that training. Very good.
- Glad it was available to them!
- Less reading, more videos, public awareness. Get the word out.
- Wants her area to be able to participate in pilot. They were not given the materials in her area to her knowledge. She does not know of any care facility in her area that was able to use it.
- Good resource for rural areas. Has only heard good things about it.
- Has not seen it or heard anything about it, other than it exists.
- Has heard no complaints.
- Their county is a very small audience, so there wasn't a big need for it.
- This is a rural county and it was very effective. People didn't have to drive very far. It was very economical as people could do it in their homes.
- Excellent investment for the state. Should be made available for purchase. Great!
- Great concept!
- Great!
- They had to drive 20 minutes to do the pretest, then drive back to the center. This was the only thing that was inconvenient.
- Much needed and is being used. Takes longer than the 8 hours it was marketed for to complete.
- Material was excellent. Thought the material was for training day care workers. Other agents thought the same thing.

Other Reasons Why Child Care Workers May Not Have Used the Training Kit

- Time frame hiring vs. time frame pilot period
- Not knowing about the existence of the training kit
- Too long

Agencies Which Collaborated in Implementing this Program at the County Level

- Community Services Agency (2)
- Head Start (5)
- Texas Department of Human Services (7)
- Texas Agricultural Extension Service (6)
- Local community care centers and Methodist Church
- CPS (4)
- Blair Foundation
- Child Development Council
- Job Training Partnership Act
- TWC
- Family Services Center
- Licensing
- Local nursery
- Home Economics committee
- Local child care
- Two care centers
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (2)
- Child care centers
- Child care center
- Parker County Professional Child Care Association
- Migrant Council
- Texas Department of Health
- Local day care centers

Other Ways Respondents Advertised the Training Kit

- Presentation
- A letter to registered child care providers
- Gave program at district wide conference for managers
- Child care display at a training program
- Special feature in the newspaper about the curriculum
- Information letter to individual facilities
- Contacting high school home economics class and church nursery
- Telephone
- Mass mailing list
- Parenting coalition
- Flyers at committee meetings
- Sent letters to home economics teachers
- Sent out announcements